Region 6
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5200 Forest Insect and Disease Control November 7, 1977

Report on Republic Ranger District

Forest Supervisor, Colville NF

Gregory M. Filip, Pathologist with Forest Insect and Disease Management, recently visited the Republic RD and prepared the following report of his observations:

> On October 4-6 a visit was made to the Republic Ranger District, Colville National Forest, to examine a variety of problems on the District. I was accompanied by Craig Schmitt, RO Forestry Technician.
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> We first examined a plantation of pole-size western larch with recent top-kill. Tops appeared a brilliant orange as contrasted to the yellow fall foliage in the lower crown. Examination of the stem showed severe girdling just below the point of dieback. Stems were usually completely girdled at about 10-20 feet above ground level. Although several lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir were in the plantation, only western larch was affected. Specimens of the damage were brought back to the RO in Portland and were examined by Paul "Rod" Canutt, wildlife habitat management, and Keith Guenther, Regional Animal Damage Biologist. Guenther had observed similar damage on the Keetle Falls Ranger District which he suspected was caused by snowshoe hare. However, girdling on the Republic Ranger District was well above the snowline. The other possibility that they mentioned was squirrel damage. One squirrel nest was observed in the plantation.
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> In the same plantation several larch appeared to have a striking change in bark characteristics. Part of the stem was furrowed and then would abruptly change into smooth bark covered with numerous small resin patches. This condition is not known to be caused by any insect or disease and may be a normal physiological condition. There appeared to be no other damage associated with this bark condition.
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> We also visited a young plantation of ponderosa pine on the District. Some of the trees appeared chlorotic. Upon

examination of the most dramatic case, aphids were found on some of the needles, part of the stem appeared to have animal damage, and wood borers were found in the root collar. Possibly a combination of adverse conditions (drought, poor planting, etc.) might have weakened the tree, inviting attack by normally secondary agents. A few trees in the plantation were killed by pine engraver beetles (*Ips pini*). There was some thinning slash piled near the dead trees. Populations of engraver beetles are attracted to fresh thinning slash and may infest living trees if there is insufficient slash to absorb the incoming beetles. After initial attack of living trees, however, engraver beetles will not spread to other residual trees.

I support all the statements and recommendations Dr. Filip made in his report. The Forest Insect and Diseaee Management Staff Group is available at any time to provide assistance to the Colville NF.

FRANK J. KOPECKY

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cc: Colleen Shannon, Republic RD

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